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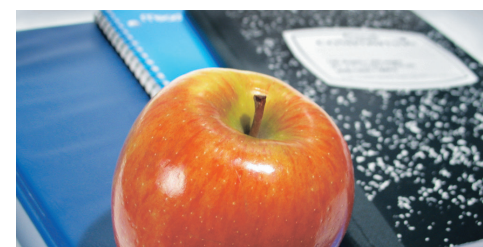
Surviving the back to school shopping spree

Armed with coupons, store flyers and a long list of must-have items, over one-third of Canadians are now taking on the daunting task of back-to-school shopping this season. A recent survey of Canadian consumers across the country revealed that nearly one in two consumers feel this annual shopping ritual is a stressful one.

The survey, conducted by Vision Critical for Staples Canada, indicated financial pressures as the leading contributor to feelings of stress associated with shopping for back-to-school (91 per cent). Finding all the items on the list and the in-store experience are also sources of stress for many (80 per cent and 72 per cent respectively).

To make it easier for consumers leading retailers such as Staples have equipped its stores with helpful resources, such as lists of basic supplies needed for each grade. Associates are also trained for the back-to-school season to help customers find the items they require for a successful school year, making the in-store experience a smoother one for parents.

The survey also found that good value for money is the main driver of store choice for back-to-school shoppers across the country (81 per cent strongly or somewhat agree). Other survey findings included:



- 74 per cent agree that they prefer to make their own shopping list;
- 70 per cent agree that budgeting is important;
- 44 per cent wish there were more online resources to help make shopping easier.

To help you start planning for the busy back to school season here are some tips:

- Sit down with your child to make a list of everything they need for the school year and set out your budget. It's never too early to help them learn organization and budgeting skills.
- Take inventory through last year's supplies to see if items can be reused and recycled.
- Plan for emergencies and stock up on supplies you know your kids will need later when they're on sale. More information on back to school trends and tips is available at www.staples.ca/backto-schoolcentre.

—www.newscanada.com



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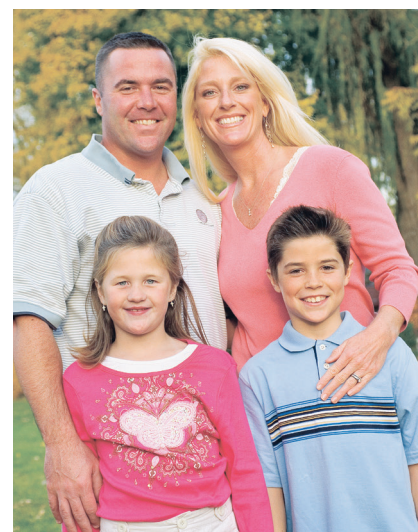
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